



ST. CHARLES PARISH

DEPARTMENT OF WATERWORKS

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V.J. ST. PIERRE, JR.
PARISH PRESIDENT

ROBERT BROU
DIRECTOR

TO: V.J. St. Pierre, Jr., Parish President

FROM: Robert Brou, Director of Waterworks

SUBJECT: 2011 Annual Report

Sales for 2011 were up compared to the same period in 2010. Usage for 2011 was up 76.3 million gallons (3.2%) compared to 2010 and sales were up \$424,400 (4.3%).

Groundbreaking for the new East Bank Water Treatment Plant was held in November 2008, with construction proceeding throughout 2009 and 2010. The two new plants were placed into service in the third quarter of 2011. This expansion of the East Bank treatment facilities include two new 6 million gallons per day (MGD) Super Pulsator clarifiers, two 6 MGD Greenleaf filter units, a new operator control room and chemical feed building. As of the end of 2011 these treatment processes have continued to outperform all of our other plants. This should continue to improve as we optimize the processes through experience.

It should be noted that the newest of the other seven water plants operated by the department is over twenty five years old and therefore they all need constant maintenance and upgrades to continue to operate in compliance with current regulations. The oldest plants on both East and West Banks are 60 years old; these are the original Water Treatment Plants for St. Charles Parish.

Hurricane shutters were installed at both East and West Bank Treatment Plants in 2011. The installation of hurricane shutters at both Treatment Plants, as well as the shutters installed in 2010 at both office buildings were funded through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Program.

BILLING In spite of our efforts to give customers our undivided attention, we still performed nearly 3,191 lock-offs, which is a decrease from the previous year.

A new billing software package was obtained in 2009. The transition to the new software was completed in 2010. This will allow us in the future to do such things as combining the residential and 2nd irrigation meters of our customers into one bill thus reducing postage and printing costs, offering e-billing to customers who no longer want a paper bill and the possibility of implementing a blanket-type meter deposit for owners of multiple properties that only need service on for short periods between renters. The Department is actively working to implement these changes and the first should occur in early 2012.

Bank Drafting was first made available to customers in 1997, and the number of people taking advantage of this service has increased in 2011. At the end of December, 2780 customers are participating in bank drafting, with a total number of transactions for 2011 being 32,690. This represents 14.0% of our total collection activities.

On-line Bill Payments was first made available to customers in July 2008, and the number of customers taking advantage of this service has increased. The total payments received through this service for 2011 was 21,267. This represents only about 9.1% of our total collections, but it is another option offered to the customers for paying their bills. Mail is still the most favored method of payment but has shown a steady decline since the implementation of these two payment options.

METER READING 272,124 accounts were scheduled to be read in 2011. Of this number, 21,982 (8.08%) meters failed the parameter check (50% over / 50% under average customer consumption) and were reread / re-checked during the reading process. Another 2,077 (0.76%) readings/consumption usage inconsistencies were rechecked through the issuance of work orders.

The department has begun the transition to electronic or Automatic Meter Readings (AMR). Two radio read units, laptops and software have been purchased in 2009 and 2010. We will continue to replace old and outdated meters with ones compatible with this new system. Utilizing this methodology it will take many years to completely transition the departments 22,000 plus meters to AMR, but will allow us to spread the cost over many budget cycles. Once complete this system will reduce the number of employees classified as Meter Readers needed by the Waterworks. The Department of Waterworks has purchased approximately 1800 AMR meters representing nearly 8% of our total water meters.

DISTRIBUTION The distribution system required a significant amount of maintenance in 2011. 144 repairs were completed on services of 2 inches or less as well as 97 leaks on the main line. 89 water services of 2 inches or less were installed. 52 other maintenance activities were completed as well as 5,381 calls for line locations.

Approximately 8600 feet of Cast Iron water main was replaced along Highway 631 between 4th Street and Audubon in Paradis. This project will improve water quality, flow and pressure for this entire community.

To accommodate the West Bank and Vicinity Hurricane protection project the Department of Waterworks worked with the Corps of Engineers to relocate approximately 3000 feet of 12" water main along Highway 90.

The Department of Public Works constructed drainage projects that required Waterworks to relocate several water mains throughout the parish including work on Ormond Blvd., Pine Street (Bayou Gauche), Bayou Estates South, Dixie Drive, Pleasant Valley Drive, Maryland Drive, Wade Street and Thoroughbred Drive. There will be need for numerous other relocations as Public Works continues their efforts in 2012.

In addition the Department of Waterworks coordinated the relocation of water mains on Almedia Road in St. Rose and at the intersection of Highway 306 and WPA Road in Bayou Gauche to facilitate two road projects constructed by the Louisiana Department of Transportation.

PLANT OPERATIONS There were no drinking water quality problems during the year. All operational data and reports received on organic, inorganic, bacteriological and radiological laboratory analyses indicated that our drinking water quality met and exceeded all regulations during the year.

Engineering was begun on the refurbishment of the East Bank's C Plant Clarifier with construction activities to be performed after the new plants have been placed into service. The EB C-plant will be refurbished sometime in 2012. Engineering for C-plant is being funded by the State of Louisiana through its capital outlay program with construction funds coming from Departmental funds.

FUTURE CONCERNS

Additional sources of funding for required capital projects must be found in order to prevent disruptions in service or allowing our infrastructure to deteriorate. Delays in repairing or replacing infrastructure items only add to the ultimate costs and increase the chances that water quality or supply will be adversely affected. We will continue to seek funds from grants, capital outlay and federal appropriations to fund our major projects.

Thought should also be given to implementing some system of accessing monetary impact to the Department's infrastructure by subdivision developers with appropriate fees being imposed accordingly.

Changes to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Operator Certification requirements may require the Department of Waterworks to hire additional employees to work in our treatment plants in the near future. It is possible that we will have to develop an "Operator in Training" position to work with the licensed operator. This new position would act as a training ground for new operators without the time constraints on obtaining a license from the state. This position would also improve safety for employees working night and weekend shifts.